

Administrator's Update for 1/18/12
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

At last week's Regular Board Meeting, the Board of County Commissioners approved the right of entry agreement with the private property owner adjacent to the Harborwalk project site in the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Area. The approval of this agreement will allow this signature project to move forward in getting the final approvals from the Florida Department of Transportation.

Local testing dates

Following discussions at the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) annual conference by our Charlotte County code enforcement staff and the testing company that the county uses, for the first time since Charlotte County started regulating contractors (49 years), testing will be available in Charlotte County for four dates in 2012. This will not only allow prospective and existing Charlotte County contractors to test without traveling 100-plus miles to alternative testing locations, but will also encourage other candidates to visit Charlotte County to take the test.

Trees and paving saved

Our Charlotte County environmental specialists met with the property managers of a subdivision in El Jobean who wanted to remove several large oak trees because they were starting to interfere with some driveways. The property managers were open to suggestions for not removing the trees since they valued them a great deal and tree removal is costly. It was suggested that root pruning around where the roots were interfering with the driveways would, over time, solve the problem and keep the beautiful oak trees preserved. The property managers were happy with this solution for it not only kept the aesthetic features of the neighborhood intact and saved them the cost to remove these trees, but it also solved the root encroachment problems as well.

Trauma blankets

Our Charlotte County Fire/EMS department has installed new thermal blankets that were purchased with grant monies. Recent studies have shown that significantly warming up our trauma patients and then keeping them warm will reduce the hypothermia portion of early death from severe trauma. This comes on the recommendation of the trauma surgeons international group as well. The blankets warm up to full potential in 10 minutes or less and remain so for at least 6 hours. The Fire/EMS department has written them into their protocols for any trauma, burned or patient suspected of being hypothermic for any reason, again giving them a better chance of survival due to any type of injury or illness that would greatly reduce their own ability to stay warm. All personnel in the department have been trained on them and they are on the Rescues and outlying Engines.

Major editorial coverage

The County Tourism Office has compiled the fiscal year tourism editorial coverage, for Oct. 2010 through Sept. 2011, for Charlotte Harbor and the Gulf Islands. The bureau's proactive public relations campaign throughout the fiscal year included writing and pitching media releases, hosting ten members of the media in Charlotte County on six trips and calling on and meeting with 46 travel journalists throughout the year. This has resulted in our destination appearing in publications such as The Atlanta Journal

Constitution, Orlando Sentinel and Parade Magazine. The circulation total for the print and electronic editorial coverage the destination has received totals more than 50.4 million impressions with an advertising equivalent of more than \$841,000. Through editorial coverage the destination continues to build awareness which should result in more visitation to the area.